COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION (CBE) TEMPLATE

INTRODUCTION

The Competency-Based Education (CBE) Template must be completed by institutions offering courses and/or programs using the CBE methodology. The template supplements and augments ACCET Document 3 – Analytic Self-Evaluation Report, which incorporates the ACCET Standards for Accreditation (Document 2). The template expands upon the ACCET Standards specifically referenced herein by adding Specific Field Criteria and Supplemental Questions/Statements, in order to elicit a more relevant and valid self-evaluation of the institution and emphasize those standards where unique characteristics are identified.

COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION

Competency-based education (CBE) is an outcomes-based approach to earning a post-secondary certificate, degree or other credential. Competencies are clearly defined statements of what students know and can do as a result of their learning at an institution of higher education. While competencies may include knowledge, skill, or understanding, they primarily emphasize what students can do with their knowledge.

Students progress through CBE by demonstrating competencies specified at the course and/or program level. This is known as a course/credit-based approach to CBE which is supported by ACCET processes (NOTE: ACCET does not support a direct assessment approach to CBE at this time.)

Course/credit-based programs generally enroll students in traditional academic terms and award credits for courses successfully completed. Students may accelerate their learning and receive credit for the course when they have demonstrated mastery of the competencies by passing a summative assessment.

The institution’s curriculum during the period of student enrollment is structured around these specified competencies, and satisfactory academic progress is expressed as the student’s attainment or mastery of the identified competencies. Each standard of competency has identified performance assessment(s) and corresponding rubrics appropriately designed to reliably validate mastery of the identified standards of competencies. Competencies are often anchored to external expectations, such as those of employers or professional organizations. Therefore, to demonstrate mastery of a competency, students must generally perform at a level considered to be very good or excellent. Regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor is a requirement of competency-based education. The curriculum provides clear pathways to completion and builds a unified body of knowledge that leverages CBE frameworks, disciplines, standards, national norms, as well as workforce and societal needs.

The first time an institution offers a course/credit-based CBE program, it must be approved by ACCET’s Commission through the substantive change process. ACCET will consider a program to be competency-based when any course or collection of courses has learning goals expressed as competencies and requires each student to demonstrate mastery of identified competencies to earn course credit.
Specific field criteria for CBE are applicable to programs that are delivered in full or part using a CBE approach. Institutions are directed to respond to the Supplemental Questions/Statements in this Competency-Based Education (CBE) Template relative to the portion of the program delivered through the CBE framework.

**STANDARD 1 – MISSION, GOALS, AND PLANNING**

The institution has a mission and goals that are compatible with the mission, scope, and standards of ACCET and has an effective planning process to enhance and improve the institution and its education, training, and services.

**A. Mission:** The institution clearly states its mission and makes it public. The mission defines the purpose of the institution and provides a definitive basis upon which to deliver and assess its education and training programs. The institution establishes and utilizes specific criteria to measure whether it is achieving its mission. The education and training provided by the institution are consistent with its mission, and the rationale for offering this education is documented by either an assessment of projected need and/or successful market experience.

*Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:* The reasons for offering the courses/programs via CBE are consistent with the institution's stated mission.

*Supplemental Question/Statement for Competency-Based Education:*

- How does CBE support the mission and serve the target population?

**B. Goals:** The institution establishes broad goals that support the institution’s mission and are consistent with the Principles of Ethics for ACCET Institutions. These goals guide the operation of the institution, including admissions, finances, education and training, management, and student services.

*Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:* The inclusion of CBE courses/programs are reflected within the broad institutional goals.

*Supplemental Question/Statement for Competency-Based Education:*

- Describe how the institution includes competency-based education in the development of its broad goals.
- How do the institution’s broad goals guide its operation specific to CBE?

**C. Planning:** The institution utilizes a planning process, consistent with its scope and size, to establish plans that support the institution’s mission and goals. The plans are reviewed at least annually, updated regularly, and implemented to improve the effectiveness of the institution. There are sound, written one-year and longer range (three to five year) plans that encompass both the educational and operational objectives of the institution. The plans include specific and measurable objectives, along with


corresponding operational strategies, projected time frames, required resources, and method(s) for subsequent evaluation, that are utilized to measure progress in achieving the established objectives.

**Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:** Written plans are formulated and periodically updated which support the curricular, instructional, technological, and marketing objectives of the CBE courses/programs.

**Supplemental Question/Statement for Competency-Based Education:**

- Does the institution maintain separate planning documents for CBE programs? If yes, please provide. If not, provide references to the pertinent sections of the institution’s current and long-term planning documents relative to its CBE programs.

**STANDARD II – GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

The institution is capably and responsibly managed.

**A. Governance:** The institution has a clearly identified and accountable governance structure which delineates authority for the approval of institutional policies and responsibility for the overall direction and effectiveness of the institution. This management structure ensures the integrity and capability of the institution and its compliance with statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements.

**Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:** The institution maintains adequate written policies and procedures specifically designed to address the effective delivery of CBE courses/programs, whether discretely organized or incorporated as elements of other policies and procedures.

**Supplemental Question/Statement for Competency-Based Education:**

- Provide a representative sample of policies and supporting procedures that guide the establishment, organization, funding, instruction, and management of CBE programs.

**B. Institutional Management:** The institution’s management is responsible for developing and effectively implementing policies within an organizational framework that is clearly defined, understood, and effective. Written policies and procedures guide the day-to-day operations of the institution.

**Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:** Operational management oversees the effective implementation of systems to guide the day-to-day operations of CBE courses/programs.

**Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:**

- Describe how the organizational structure supports the CBE programs. Provide an organizational chart for all CBE personnel.
• Describe how operational management facilitates relationships between instructional personnel, technical support services, and student services.

D. Records: The institution has an organized record-keeping system that ensures all records are maintained in an accurate, orderly, and up-to-date manner. The record-keeping system facilitates ready access and review of these records by appropriate parties. All records are protected from unauthorized access and undue risk of loss. Employees and students have appropriate access to information contained in their files. Records are maintained for a period of time consistent with applicable statutes, regulations, and sound business and educational practices.

**Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:** Resources are available to provide appropriate access to CBE-related records (e.g. student/faculty computerized databases) for students, regulatory bodies, and ACCET. CBE records can be selected by student number, student name, start date or scheduled-to-graduate date cohorts, and by program of study.

**Supplemental Question/Statement for Competency-Based Education:**

• Briefly describe the student/faculty database utilized for CBE courses/programs to ensure the appropriate reporting and tracking of students’ progress in mastering required competencies and access to CBE-related records for students, regulatory bodies, and ACCET.

• What operational safeguards, including written procedures, exist to ensure the integrity of, and access to, CBE student records in the event of equipment problems and/or school closure?

F. Professional Relationships: The institution establishes relationships, memberships, and affiliations with other organizations within the education/training and employer/industry network. These relationships are maintained, utilized, and documented for the purpose of enhancing the quality of the education, training, and student services.

**Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:** Cooperative relationships with CBE associations, professional organizations, vendors, sponsoring organizations, and/or networks are maintained. Such relationships are used to develop institutional expertise in the design of competencies and delivery of quality training that uses effective CBE technologies.

**Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:**

• Describe the institution's professional relationships with other organizations. How are they used to enhance the quality of the educational design, delivery, and methodology of the CBE programs?

**STANDARD III – FINANCIAL CAPACITY AND RESPONSIBILITY**

The institution is fiscally sound and demonstrates ethical financial practices.

B. Financial Procedures: The institution assesses its finances at adequate intervals, not less than quarterly. Written policies and procedures exist for proper financial controls and
the supervision of financial management staff. Tuition charges are applied fairly and consistently. Receipt of tuition payments and other monies is properly recorded and tracked. Cancellation and refund policies are written, fair, and equitable; are consistently administered; and comply with statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements. Qualified and capable individuals manage and evaluate the effectiveness of the financial operations and practices.

Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education: The institution maintains effective oversight of the financial status of its CBE programs and implements procedures to timely determine the enrollment status of students relative to financial obligations and graduation processes.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:

- How are CBE programs included in the institution’s overall budget?

- Demonstrate that the budget provides for appropriate updating of technologies and instructional materials adopted for CBE programs.

- For CBE students, what are the policies and procedures for the following, if different than for other students:
  - determining last date of attendance (LDA);
  - monitoring student attendance;
  - identifying dropouts and making timely refunds; and
  - conducting initial and exit counseling?

C. Financial Assistance/Scholarships: The institution ensures that any student financial assistance programs, including federal and state financial aid programs, institutional scholarships, and externally funded scholarships, are responsibly administered, governed by written policies and procedures, and in full compliance with relevant statutes and regulations. All student financial assistance is awarded in a fair and equitable manner.

Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education: Institutions offering CBE programs utilize procedures for administering and monitoring financial aid eligibility and disbursement that are appropriate to the delivery method of the CBE course or program.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:

- Describe any separate processes used for the purposes of determining continued student eligibility that are distinct from those for non-CBE programs.

STANDARD IV – CURRICULUM DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

The institution’s curriculum design and instructional materials are up-to-date, educationally sound, and appropriate for the expected outcomes of the program/courses.
A. **Educational Goals and Objectives:** The institution’s programs and courses have appropriate educational goals and objectives. The curriculum content and learning experiences are preplanned and present a sound, systematic, and sequential educational methodology. Sufficient and appropriate knowledge and skill elements are included to meet the specific and measurable performance outcomes expected for the courses and programs.

**Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:** The curricular content and learning experiences are structured in a form appropriate for CBE and commensurate with institution-wide standards. The curriculum provides clear pathways to completion and builds a unified body of knowledge that leverages frameworks, disciplines, standards, national norms, and workforce and societal needs. The curricular design ensures that the level and complexity of the competencies are congruent with industry and professional norms and with the achievements required for the academic level of the credential. Regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor is a CBE requirement.

**Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:**

- List the courses/programs that are offered in whole or in part via CBE.
- Describe how the institution determines the length of the CBE program or portion of the program, as measured in clock hours and, if applicable, credit hours.
- Describe how the institution ensures that the clock hour or applicable credit hour requirements are met for courses/programs offered using CBE.
- Provide a copy of the institution's written policy and procedure for course design and development. How does the process ensure that the curriculum design provides clear pathways to completion and builds a unified body of knowledge based on identified standards of competency?
- Demonstrate that CBE courses/programs offerings meet the same curricular objectives and expected learning outcomes as traditional courses/programs.

B. **Program/Instructional Materials:** Program materials, including syllabi, lesson plans, instructional guides, and texts demonstrate the appropriate scope, sequence, and depth of each program or course in relation to the stated goals and objectives. Instructional materials, including supplementary textbooks, software, learning activities, visual aids, electronic links, and other teaching tools support the goals and objectives. All materials are up-to-date, readily available, and facilitate positive learning outcomes.

**Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:** Program materials that clearly guide students through CBE courses/programs have been adopted or adapted and are demonstrated to be effective and appropriate to the identified standards of competency. Personalization and flexibility in curriculum are supported by the logic of the curriculum design and are educationally sound.
Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:

- Describe how the design of course materials and syllabi contain clear directions and helpful guidelines that support the CBE students’ effective attainment and demonstration of the identified standards of competency.

- Demonstrate how course materials provide a structure that enables regular and substantive interaction between students and instructors.

C. Externships/Internships: When required as a part of a program, an externship/internship or other training-related work experience is based on a preplanned outline of the specific knowledge, skills, and experience to be acquired. Written policies and procedures for the supervision and evaluation of externships/internships are established and followed to ensure consistency and effectiveness. The institution provides a sufficient number of sites to ensure appropriate and timely learning experiences in its externship/internship program.

Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education: An externship/internship or other training-related work experience is based on a preplanned outline of the specific competencies to be acquired and demonstrated by students.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:

- List all CBE programs that provide an externship/internship as a component of the program. For each listed program, include the following: (a) how the institution defines the length of the externship/internship (whether in clock hours, semester or quarter credits, and/or completion of competencies); (b) the time at which externship/internship occurs within the program; and (c) the specific, measurable overarching competencies.

- Identify the competencies and required learning outcomes for the externship/internship and how these were established and validated by industry/employers. How and when are these competencies and outcomes communicated to students and externship/internship providers?

- Describe the criteria for evaluating student performance at CBE-program externship/internship sites, including: (a) the grading system used; (b) how frequently the institution's personnel conducts on-site reviews and evaluations of externships/internships to ensure each student's progress; (c) the criteria used by the externship/internship site supervisor to evaluate student performance in achieving demonstration of competencies; and (d) how frequently feedback is reported. Describe how students' mastery of competencies is recorded and monitored during the internship/externship. Attach a copy of the evaluation form used to assess the progress toward mastery of competencies for externs/interns.

- What provision does the institution make to obtain student feedback from their externship/internship sites?
• What provision does the institution make to obtain externship/internship feedback on the currency, relevancy, and the accuracy of the prescribed competencies?

D. Curriculum Review/Revision: The institution implements effective written policies to continuously monitor and improve the curriculum. The policies include both soliciting and utilizing feedback from relevant constituencies (e.g. faculty, students, graduates, employers, and advisory/certification boards) and analyzing student outcomes, including student completion, and, if applicable, job placement results. The policies focus on a comprehensive review of the curriculum as it relates to the expected learning outcomes.

Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education: The review of competencies and CBE-program student learning outcomes is structured in a form appropriate for CBE and commensurate with institution-wide standards. This structure is demonstrated to be well-suited to continuous improvement and driven by learner performance, as well as CBE frameworks, disciplines, standards, national norms, and workforce and societal needs.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:

• Attach a copy of the written policies and procedures for curricular review of CBE programs. Describe the curriculum review and revision process including: (a) the schedule for reviewing specific CBE programs; (b) positions with primary responsibility for the review and revision process, and (c) positions providing management oversight of the process.

• Explain how the institution utilizes a continuous improvement model to clarify any ambiguous competencies, thus supporting a clearer pathway to the intended outcome for learners. Further, how are data regarding learner progression collected through the pathways so that curricular improvements are made when barriers are identified?

• Describe the process through which the institution assesses the changing needs of employers and industries in order to maintain the currency, relevancy, and accuracy of the CBE program’s stated competencies. How are competencies regularly evaluated and updated in response to changing industry standards and/or certification/licensing requirements in addition to feedback from faculty, students, graduates, and advisory boards, as applicable?

• Provide evidence that the institution has examined current CBE-specific methodologies, frameworks, and materials as part of its curricular review process. Describe any changes made to the institution’s curricula as a result of this review.

• Attach a representative sample of the analyses produced during the most recent scheduled review of the CBE-specific curricula, and, if applicable, provide examples of revisions in any areas where the possibility for improvement was identified.
STANDARD V – INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY AND RESOURCES

The institution utilizes appropriate and effective instructional methods and other resources to ensure sound instructional delivery, which may be provided through a variety of delivery modes, including traditional classroom/lab instruction, Competency-Based Education, and blended instruction.

A. Instructional Methods: Instructional methods encourage active and motivated responses from students. Written policies and procedures are in place to ensure that the curricula are followed and that there is consistency of application by all instructional staff. The instructional methodology is consistent with contemporary training industry standards and appropriate to the educational goals and curricular objectives, facilitates learning, and serves the individual learning needs and objectives of students. Instructional methods provide encouragement, challenges, and learning opportunities for all enrolled students, taking into consideration different learning abilities and styles, prior levels of achievement, and different learning modalities such as visual, audio, and kinesthetic.

Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education: The institution’s instructional methods suit the delivery of the materials, the information being conveyed, and the stated competency outcomes of the CBE courses/programs. Instructional methods are appropriate for courses/programs offered via CBE and encourage active participation from students. Techniques utilized include personalization, feedback, and differentiated support based on each student’s progress towards the identified standards of competency. The importance of regular and substantive interaction between instructors and students is reflected in the design of the program and its courses and in the technical facilities and services provided.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:

- What provisions for regular and substantive faculty-student interaction are included in the program design and course syllabi?
- Provide copies of the written procedures used to ensure that faculty implement the methodology consistently.
- Are students required to adhere to a structured timeline? If so, how is the timeline defined: daily objectives, weekly objectives, modular/term objectives, etc.? Describe techniques used to manage students’ differing timelines.

STANDARD VI – QUALIFICATIONS AND SUPERVISION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL

The institution ensures that qualified instructors, under professional and capable direction, effectively deliver educational and training services.

B. Supervision of Instruction: Individuals with relevant education and experience in instructional delivery and management supervise instructional personnel. Supervisors of instructional personnel demonstrate good practice in the evaluation and direction of
instructors. Regular classroom observations are conducted at least annually by qualified supervisors and, along with student and supervisory feedback, are documented and effectively utilized to enhance the quality of instruction.

**Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:** Supervisors of instructional personnel pay particular attention to the challenges of instructing students in CBE courses/programs and of assessing their achievement of competencies. The institution demonstrates it uses effective methods to monitor and evaluate instructional personnel to ensure quality CBE instruction which includes regular and substantive interaction between instructional personnel and students. The institution assesses the effectiveness of instructional personnel in planning, developing, implementing, and delivering CBE courses/programs.

**Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:**

- Describe the education and experience of each instructional supervisor and course designer relative to CBE expertise and provide a resume and/or ACCET Document 6 for each.

- Provide a copy of the institution's written policy and procedure for the determination of the effectiveness of instructional personnel in planning, developing, implementing, and delivering CBE courses/programs. Describe how the results are used to improve the performance of instructors.

- Provide a copy of the institution's written policy and procedure for monitoring and evaluating instructional personnel to ensure quality CBE. Describe how the results of these measures are used to improve the performance of instructors.

- How is instructor response time to student formative assessments measured and evaluated, and relative to what standards?

C. **Instructor Orientation and Training:** The institution develops and implements written policy for the effective orientation and training of instructional personnel to ensure a consistent, high level of instruction. Regular and relevant in-service training and/or professional development of instructional personnel are conducted and documented.

**Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:** Instructors who teach CBE courses, and other instructional support personnel, are appropriately oriented and trained in the effective guidance and support of students in CBE courses/programs and the assessment of intended competencies to ensure a high level of instructional quality, assessment, and effective communications with students.

**Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:**

- Provide a copy of the institution's written policy and procedure for instructor orientation and training activities that prepare faculty and other instructional support personnel to teach via CBE courses/programs.
• What provisions ensure that adequate attention is given to teaching methods that are either unique to CBE or desirable for effective teaching in the CBE environment?

• Provide a copy of the institution's written policy and procedure relative to continuing professional development opportunities for instructional staff to enhance skills in offering CBE courses/programs. How is the effectiveness of this professional growth and development assessed? Provide documentation demonstrating the completion of relevant professional development by CBE faculty and staff over the past 12 months.

**STANDARD VII – ADMISSIONS AND STUDENT SERVICES**

The institution recruits and enrolls only qualified students who can reasonably be expected to benefit from the education and training services and provides student services appropriate to their needs.

A. **Recruitment:** Informational and promotional materials, advertising, and representations made by or on behalf of the institution for recruiting purposes make only justifiable and provable claims regarding the courses, programs, costs, location(s), instructional personnel, student services, outcomes, and other benefits. All communications with prospective students are ethical, honest, and consistent with ACCET policies. The institution does not state or imply that employment, occupational advancement, and/or certification and licensing are guaranteed.

**Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:** All advertising, promotional materials, and other representations by, or on behalf of, the institution clearly indicate which courses/programs are offered in whole or in part in a CBE format. These materials and representations include reference to any requirements unique to students participating in courses/programs taught via CBE, including any costs specific to these offerings.

**Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:**

• Demonstrate that prospective students receive all necessary information to make an informed choice prior to enrollment in CBE courses or programs, including, but not limited to, the following disclosures:
  o fluidity of timeline for program completion;
  o arrangements for regular and substantive interaction with the faculty and fellow students; and
  o information to assist prospective students in understanding learning expectations.

B. **Admissions/Enrollment:** The institution’s written policies for admissions and enrollment are clearly stated, defined, and in compliance with statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements. Reliable and regular means are utilized to ensure that, prior to acceptance, all applicants are able to benefit from the education and training services, consistent with ACCET policies. The enrollment process, including any online process, is preplanned, effective, and regularly monitored by the institution to ensure its integrity.
The written enrollment agreement, contract, or application, as applicable, is furnished to appropriate parties before any payment or obligation is made and clearly identifies the rights, obligations, and responsibilities of all parties. This document includes: (1) all costs stated in clear and explicit language, and (2) cancellation and refund policies that comply with statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements.

**Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:** Admissions policies, procedures, and documents, including enrollment agreements and catalogs, fully and clearly represent the terms, conditions, and requirements related to CBE.

**Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:**

- What criteria are used to determine the student’s eligibility for admission to the CBE courses/programs, if different from those used for traditional students? Where are they published?

- Provide a copy of the cancellation and refund policy/procedures specific to CBE students, as stated in the enrollment agreement and catalog.

- Describe how the institution provides CBE students with the following:
  - admissions counseling;
  - competency examinations, and
  - financial counseling.

- Describe what methods the institution has established to:
  - verify the identity of students to ensure that the student who registers for a program/course delivered by competency-based education is the same student who participates in and completes the courses or programs and, if applicable, receives the academic credit; and
  - notify students, prior to enrollment in CBE training, of any projected additional student charges.

C. **Transfer of Credit:** A vocational institution has written policies and procedures that ensure the fair and equitable treatment of students relative to the transfer of credit to and from the institution. The institution provides clear, complete, factual, and timely information regarding its transfer policies and practices. All institutions making statements relative to the acceptance of their coursework for credit by another institution have documented evidence to support such statements.

**Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:** Transfer policies are explicit regarding whether credits earned in CBE courses/programs from sending institutions may be transferred into the institution. Policies also alert students to the issue of transferability of credit earned through CBE courses/programs at the institution.
Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:

- How is credit transfer assessed and awarded for CBE courses/programs, if applicable? Describe how the institution assesses mastery of competencies for students transferring credit into a CBE program, if applicable.

- Provide documented evidence that full and accurate transfer information relative to CBE courses/programs is readily available and easy to find in the catalog, other relevant publications, and on the institutional websites.

D. **Student Services:** Student services are provided consistent with the mission and learning objectives of the institution and include such services as student orientation, academic and non-academic advising, tutoring, job placement assistance, extracurricular activities, and housing, as applicable.

*Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:* Appropriate services are available for students of CBE programs, both on and off the institution's physical campus, as applicable.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:

- List and describe how the institution provides services to CBE students, including the following:
  - academic advising; and
  - tutoring.

- What challenges have been identified unique to the institution's CBE students? How does the institution identify students at risk, and what steps are taken to counsel/advise them in order to maximize retention?

**STANDARD VIII – STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT**

The institution utilizes appropriate and educationally sound methods to assess student performance, attendance, and achievement.

A. **Performance Measurements:** Performance measurements are written, periodically evaluated, and updated to ensure instructional effectiveness. The institution has a sound, written assessment system that contains a set of defined elements, such as grading scale, weighting factors, tests, quizzes, reports, projects, attendance, and participation, that are appropriately related to the performance objectives of the program or course. The institution clearly and effectively communicates the assessment system to students at orientation and/or the beginning of the course/program.

*Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:* Each standard of competency has identified performance assessment(s) and corresponding rubrics appropriately designed to reliably validate mastery of the identified standards of competency. These assessments incorporate a range of assessment types and modalities to measure the transfer of learning and mastery into varied contexts. The curriculum provides clear pathways to completion and
builds a unified body of knowledge that leverages CBE frameworks, disciplines, standards, national norms, and workforce and societal needs.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:

- How are standards of competency assessed using valid demonstrations?

- Provide evidence that the institution has identified performance assessment(s) and corresponding rubrics appropriately designed to validate mastery of the identified standards of competency.

- Describe the range of assessment modalities utilized and the process used to determine mastery for each assessment modality in order to measure the transfer of learning and mastery in varied contexts.

- Describe how faculty respond to formative assessment results with differentiated learning opportunities.

B. Attendance: The institution establishes and implements written policies and procedures for monitoring and documenting attendance. The attendance policy ensures that student attendance and participation are consistent with: (1) the expected performance outcomes of the course or program and (2) statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements, including at a minimum the required student attendance rate established by the Accrediting Commission. The institution publishes a clear description of its attendance requirements and informs students of their attendance on a regular and timely basis.

Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education: The institution systematically and effectively monitors the participation and activity of students enrolled in CBE programs to ensure student success. Policies are established for expected levels of student participation in CBE courses/programs. Students and faculty are aware of these policies, which are consistently and accurately administered.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:

- How is student’s ongoing participation defined (e.g. how does the institution account for the students’ time on task compared to the clock hours comprising the courses/programs) and monitored for CBE students? How and where are records maintained?

- Describe how student participation is tracked, including how the institution identifies and counsels, and takes appropriate actions when CBE students fall behind in their work and/or are struggling to demonstrate competencies. Attach written policies and procedures for: (1) tracking student activity and participation, (2) providing student counseling, and (3) taking appropriate actions when student fall behind in their work.

- Can students complete assignments at their own pace? If so, describe how student participation is monitored.
C. **Student Progress:** The institution effectively monitors, assesses, and records the progress of students utilizing the sound and clearly defined assessment system established by the institution. Semester credits, quarter credits, clock hours, and/or continuing education units are used to denote the successful completion of the education and training services. Student progress is documented consistently in accordance with institutionally established performance outcomes and is communicated to all students. Students are informed of their progress on a regular and timely basis. The institution publishes a clear description of its requirements for satisfactory student progress and utilizes sound written policies and procedures to determine student compliance with these requirements and to document the results.

**Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:** Policies, procedures, and practices are documented and consistently implemented in order to reliably measure student progress within the context of the CBE format. Performance assessments are supported by aligned formative assessments designed to inform interim progress towards the standards of competency. Results of formative assessments are used by both students and faculty to personalize engagement in learning towards the standards of competency.

**Supplemental Questions/Statements for Competency-Based Education:**

- Describe how student satisfactory academic progress (SAP) is tracked, including how the institution identifies and counsels CBE students who fall behind in their work and/or are struggling to demonstrate competencies. Attach written SAP policies and procedures for: (1) tracking student activity and satisfactory academic progress and (2) providing student counseling to remedy academic deficiencies.

- How and when are students provided with information about their progress towards the standards of competency, including specific feedback on current performance, understanding of desired performance, and learning strategies for improvement?

- Describe the institution’s retention strategies and attach written retention policies and procedures to ensure students’ academic achievement and successful completion of the CBE programs/courses. What are the institution’s policies on pacing and gating for timely completion?

**IX. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

The institution utilizes appropriate methods of evaluation to assess institutional effectiveness and to ensure that student outcomes are consistent with the institution’s mission and the benchmarks established by the Accrediting Commission.

A. **Student Satisfaction:** The institution establishes and implements written policies and procedures that provide an effective means to regularly assess, document, and validate student satisfaction relative to the quality of education, training, and student services provided. Open lines of communication with students exist and demonstrate responsiveness to student issues. Interim evaluations and a final evaluation upon completion of the term of enrollment are specified components of determining student satisfaction. Student feedback
is utilized to improve the education, training, and student services provided by the institution.

**Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:** The institution utilizes effective processes for measuring and analyzing student satisfaction to yield useful data specific to the CBE methodology and the student experience, including interaction with instructors and other students.

**Supplemental Question/Statement for Competency-Based Education:**

- How is student feedback used to evaluate course content and to assess and improve the effectiveness of course design, materials, and methodology utilized specifically in the CBE environment? Provide examples of student feedback utilized to improve CBE courses or programs.

D. **Completion and Job Placement:** Written policies and procedures are followed that provide effective means to regularly assess, document, and validate the quality of the education and training services provided relative to completion and placement rates, as applicable.

  - **Completion:** The number of participants who complete the programs and courses in which they enroll is consistent with the benchmarks established by the Accrediting Commission.

  - **Job Placement:** Institutions offering vocational programs provide job placement assistance to graduates and document the results to enhance the effectiveness of the training services provided. The quality of such programs is validated by positive training-related outcomes consistent with the benchmarks established by the Accrediting Commission.

**Specific Field Criteria for Competency-Based Education:** Completion and placement rates, as applicable, for courses/programs that are approved to utilize the CBE approach are tracked, reported, and monitored separately from the institution's non-CBE courses/programs to ensure outcomes consistent with ACCET-mandated benchmarks.

**Supplemental Question/Statement for Competency-Based Education:**

- **Avocational courses/programs only:** How does the institution define a completer of its CBE courses or programs in order to calculate completion rates? What are the completion rates for students in each CBE course/program?

- **Vocational programs only:** Provide a separate ACCET Document 28.1 – Completion and Placement Statistics for each vocational CBE program distinct from those documents that might record completion and placement outcomes for any residential version of the same program.

- **Vocational programs only:** Describe how placement services are provided to CBE students. How are job referrals generated and disseminated? How is placement data gathered,
documented, and verified for use in creating ACCET Document 28.1 – Completion and Placement Statistics?